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SUMMER IN THE SOUL.

“Behold, the Kingdom of God is within you.”—LUKE xvii., 21.

This same declaration runs through the New Testament. Under different forms, the truth was known in the Old Testament that the power of life lay, not in external things, but in the internal nature and dispositions of men ; yet there was great emphasis put upon it by the Saviour and his apostles. You will find, for instance, Paul, in the 14th of Romans, saying, “The kingdom of God is not meat and drink.” Now “meat and drink” refers unquestionably to the sacrificial elements, or to the most solemn and significant part of the symbolic worship of the Temple—that, therefore, to which the Jews attached a very precious significance. The apostle says, “The kingdom of God is not these instruments of worship, these symbols of truth : it is righteousness, right-living—that is, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.” And then, as if he had an eye to the thousand and one sects which prevail, each one claiming everybody, and each one, with more or less uncharitableness, holding it to be very uncertain whether any would be saved that did not belong to their church, he adds, “He that in these things [that is, in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost] serveth Christ, is acceptable to God, and approved of men.”

He that has these right inward dispositions, then, is orthodox, put him in any sect you please. You may set a diamond in pewter, or in lead, or in copper or brass, or in silver or gold, and it is a diamond still. It is a diamond in all settings. So you may put a man who

pre-eminently has the spirit of Christ in him into any sect (I do not care which one you call the lead, or the pewter, or the copper, or the brass, or the silver, or the gold), it is the Christ-disposition that makes him approved of men and accepted of God. It is not his orderliness, it is not his lineage, it is not his social connections, it is not his various obediences, it is not his worship or service, but all that lies back of these, and which these were designed to feed and to educate, that determines his manhood. It is not in points of belief, it is not in organized philosophical doctrines, that the kingdom of God consists. The kingdom of God may be ministered to by these things, but the kingdom of God itself is soul-power. It is the living force of a living man. And when that living force of a living man is inspired of God, when it moves according to the divine disposition, then it is the kingdom of God.

There is something in this declaration—namely, the localization of the root of God's kingdom in the individual. We are accustomed to hear it said that the kingdom of God is in the church. I hope it is. It would be hard for any church that had not in it one man who had the kingdom of God in him; and when the church has such a man in it, it has in it the kingdom of God; but the church is not that kingdom. No association of good men distinctively and primarily is the kingdom of God. God's kingdom establishes itself in the individual; and wherever there is a single person who has in him righteousness, joy, love and peace, these distinctively Christian traits ruling in him, there is the kingdom of God, and, so far as the individual is concerned, the disposition of God, the whole of it, or the elements out of which its wholeness is yet to be completed. It is a perfect thing in an individual. Now, you may multiply individuals, and thus augment their power by association; but the Kingdom of God resides in each person,—or nowhere.

You will take notice how, in the New Testament, without ostentation, without the blowing of any trumpet, without the making of any declaration, the unit is shifted. In the Hebrew economy, the father was the federal head of the family. The whole family stood in him. Still more was this

so in the Roman administration and commonwealth. The child was in the father, and the father owned the wife and the servant. Therefore, in the more barbarous periods of the early ages, when the father had committed a sin, the whole family was punished ; because the family was he, and he was it. The household was a unit. But, without saying anything on the subject, the New Testament quietly assumes that the individual is the unit in society, and that the child is not held responsible for the parent, nor the parent for the child when he is grown, but each one for himself. It is thus declared in the language of the apostle :

“So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.”

Now, if you put the emphasis wrong, you stumble on that passage. Many men read it, “So then every one of us shall *give account* of himself”; they think it is a solemn declaration of accountability. But the emphasis should not be put on the word *account* ; particular reference is made to every separate individual person, and the passage should be read, “Every one shall give account of *himself* to God.” It stands in the argument, saying that a man must be let alone; that is, that he is free ; and that because he is free, you have no right to domineer over him by your authority, nor to make your conscience the pattern of his thought—that he is responsible to God. To his own master he stands or falls. “Every one shall give account of *himself* to God.” Therefore stand out of his way, and do not oppress him, nor hinder him, nor shackle him. It is an argument of individual liberty.

This is the great truth of the New Testament—namely, that in the spiritual realm each one stands for a whole. We are not regarded by the Lord primarily as composite elements of the church nor as members of a family or of a nation—though we hold all these subsidiary and subordinate relationships. Each individual of us is looked upon as an empire, as a kingdom ; and when rightly builded and related, it is the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven.

Now, this kingdom does not exist in men by nature. It comes not with observation. It is not a physical kingdom ; it is not a fleshly kingdom : it is a kingdom that is set up in

each person's heart, and carried on step after step, by discipline, by instruction, by influences of a thousand kinds ; and although, being begun, it is carried far forward in this life, often it is perfected only in the life which is to come.

We have been taught that men by nature are without holiness. We have been taught that by reason of the fault of our great ancestor we are all of us inheriting a certain something, a part of which is a want of righteousness. We are taught that we are not good naturally—that we are not by nature holy. It is just as true as it can be that we are not holy by nature. Whatever Adam had to do with it, one thing is very certain : that every one who is born into this life is born as empty of the kingdom of God as possible. So a man is born empty of walking. A man is born empty of seeing. And a man is born empty of hearing. We are told that men lack original righteousness. Well, they lack original muscle-ness. They lack bones. A man is nothing but gristle to start on. When he begins in this life he does not know how to stand, or move, or run. He is empty of saltatory accomplishments. He is empty also of carving, and painting, and arithmetic, and geography. He is empty of science. He is empty of everything. He is a bundle of emptinesses that are to be filled up. And men are born destitute not only of physical accomplishments, but of intellectual, social, and spiritual elements. They are born destitute of spiritual elements, because they are born destitute of everything. They begin below everything, and then quietly develop, and rise up, step by step, and come, not to righteousness alone, but to every physical excellence, and to every social excellence. Whatever they reach, they come to by a process of education and unfolding ; and at the beginning they are not more deficient in spiritual and moral elements than in social and physical elements. It is given to man to be born as a mere collection of tendencies ; and it is the business of life to develop these tendencies.

Men will develop differently, because there is a potent force which exists in different proportions in different individuals. The great question of heredity comes in here. Men start composed differently. They have the same faculties,

just as all English literature has one alphabet ; but as with this alphabet infinitely different spellings are allowed, and words and meanings are multiplied, and phrases and sentences are varied and combined, so men having the same faculties have them in different proportions ; and men starting differently are ultimately to represent very different forms—or, as we are accustomed to say, very different characters. All are substantially alike in general : it is only specifically that they are different.

In this work, then, of building up the kingdom of God, each man is regarded in his separateness ; and the root in each man is to be developed, and the kingdom is to be established by each one in himself. It is only another name for education carried on to the higher forms of the faculties. We understand perfectly what it is to develop the physical kingdom which consists of strength and skill. We know what it is to educate men intellectually. We know what it is to educate them socially to refinement of manners and accomplishments. We understand how to develop the kingdom of society, the kingdom of matter, and the kingdom of thought in men ; and by precisely the same lines and analogies we are to develop the kingdom of heaven, or the higher spiritual graces and elements, in men.

It would seem as if, since this is the highest and comes the latest, it would be the most difficult. It is in fact, but not in philosophy ; for there is in the development of man as a spiritual being a central element which does not belong, that I know of, to any other part of his development. When a man is being educated physically, you are obliged to think of a thousand things ; you are obliged to watch over the different relationships which he sustains to matter, to food, to air, to water, to light. There is no one central element which, being observed, takes care of the others, in the physical development of man. And the same is true of his intellectual and æsthetic and social education. But when you come to the spiritual and highest realm, there is a distinctive peculiarity in that range—namely, that there is given to us in our higher nature, in our spiritual relations, a central and sovereign disposition which, when it is brought to force,

to power, regulates and controls all other elements. This is the great central element of love, of which the New Testament is so full, and of which theology is so empty. This great central spring when once put in play, so that it acts in full force in its own sovereign tendency, regulates, expels things that are to be expelled, throws out excrementitious matter, harmonizes, subordinates, and gives tone to the mind. If a man takes care of that one central element, it in turn takes care of all the other elements.

Now, there is no one quality or tendency in the physical realm which, being educated, brought into the ascendant, and cared for, takes care of everything else ; nor is there anything in the intellectual realm which, being once made central, impleted and kept full, acts as a regulator ; but in the moral and spiritual realm, in the dispositions which are the hardest to attain, which are regarded by men almost as shadowy, and sought for in a thousand difficult ways, there is this central regulating principle of love to God and love to man, which, being strong and active, exerts an influence under which everything else takes care of itself—under which humility takes care of itself, meekness takes care of itself, and patience takes care of itself. All qualities that seek to establish themselves according to righteousness will fall out naturally under the influence of continuous and purified love to God and to man, and will come of themselves, as do all flowers under the influence of summer.

Moralists are like men who want flowers in winter. Every flower that a man gets in winter he has to look after. If he gets twenty geraniums, he has to take twenty roots, and put them in twenty pots, in twenty places, under glass ; and has to keep them warm by means of furnaces ; and has to watch against their being destroyed by frost ; and has to keep them from aphides, and everything else that threatens them ; and he gets just what he seeks for, and nothing more ; and what he gets, he gets by the hardest.

But when June and July come you do not get alone just what you plant in your garden. If you put in roses, and tulips, and hyacinths, and daisies, you will get these, to be sure ; but you will not stop with these ; because the sun,

shining and warming the atmosphere, will bring forth all forms of vegetation ; and myriads of flowers and grasses besides those which you plant will edge your bed about. All nature broods, and broods, and develops many things which man does not sow, nor plant, nor cultivate.

Now, there is this same analogy in the moral realm. Men often seek to build up this, that, or the other petty virtue. One man learns to hold his tongue. Well,—that is a good thing to do—(and, on the whole, I was unfortunate in that illustration ; because I recollect that one of the apostles somewhere says something to the effect that if a man is able to hold his tongue he is a perfect man. The declaration is, substantially, that if a man can do that, he can do anything else—not that he necessarily does.) But, men attempt in spots to establish single virtues. They attempt in special emergencies to bring out a certain Christian quality just as they deal out medicine. There is an ache ; and there must be this pilule or pill, as the case may be, which is special to that particular trouble. So men are trying to be Christians by specialties. They try to build up a moral and spiritual character by watching against separate temptations here and there. But the truth is that a man whose soul is educated in the atmosphere of divine love has that within him which ministers to all these qualities, all the time ; and the soul is full, and is constantly overflowing them automatically. It is summer in a man, and everything is growing there, when once you raise this element into ascendancy in him. Furnace heat will be no longer needed when the solar blaze, this wonderful principle which germinates and regulates everything, gains control. Without it, everything is force-work ; with it, everything is spontaneous. Without it, everything is clashing and irregular ; with it, everything is harmonious and perfectly orderly. Without it, everything is special and partial ; with it, everything is systematic and universal all through life. If one can mount up to that higher development of the soul where God's kingdom lies ; if one can come into possession of that conquering benevolence which is of God, which is like God, which goes back to God, and which has in it something of the infinite power of God ; if one can establish himself on

that, and give it force and instrumentality, then he occupies a position in which he is master of himself and the various elements that are around about him. The whole work lies in this one thing—and that is more than you can say of any other development.

We have heard it said that the higher forms of spiritual growth are the most difficult. They have been the most difficult because men have attempted to produce them by specialities. They have undertaken to unfold this virtue and that virtue as elements independent of all others. In so doing they have reversed the true order. If one, at the beginning, rises to this great central principle ; if he unites himself by faith with the spirit of Christ, then with that spirit comes regulation, and harmony, and growth, and all spiritual truth.

The true work of life, then, is the development of this divine disposition in the soul, not simply for the sake of the thing itself, but for the sake of all those other things over which it has an expulsive or educating force in the mind.

This never happens of itself. We come to this divine dominant disposition not by chance, but by choice. If any man supposes that men are born into life absolutely good, he knows but little of human nature. Some men are born far better organized than others ; men are born relatively different ; but after all, there is an element which is not born with men, and the tendency to which is not born with men—namely, this central God-element—this disinterested benevolence. Centrality of power in efficient love—this is not born in men. No man gets it by waiting. It does not come by accident. No man receives it through an unexpected flush. It is a matter of deliberate intelligence and deliberate choice. Men must obtain it as we obtain anything else—the seed-form coming first, and the developed form afterwards.

The beginnings of the kingdom of God in every man are not knowledge, not zeal, not conscientiousness, not truth—and that I say without any imputation on these things. The true soul-force which is to recreate every man, and prepare him for heaven, is this central disposition of divine beneficence. There is a definite order of development ; but the beginning and the end of it are love. There is an order of development

of men in all their subordinate faculties—in their understanding, in their social relations, in their business affairs, in their connection with the world, with the family, with the church, and with the commonwealth of mankind; but this element of love is common to all and central to all. It is to a man what the main-spring is to a watch.

If you ask me to criticise, by this standard, the thought and purposes of men, I will say first, in regard to morality, that it is not a thing to be despised nor to be inveighed against. It is an indispensable excellence. There can be no spirituality without morality. It is that which every man should seek, or that which every man should develop. But alone, by itself, it is simple conformity to external rules and regulations. External rules and regulations are admirable, many of them; nevertheless, the kingdom of God is within you. Help yourselves just as much as you have a mind to by external rules and regulations; but the main thing is to establish in yourself that disposition of power and control which shall change thought, purpose, will, feeling, everything. Mere conformity to morality may not be against propriety in the family, in the State or in the church; it is far better than nothing. But, after all, a merely moral man with a good temperament, and a good disposition, is an uneducated and spiritually fruitless man. A moral man surrounded by a moral state of the public mind is like a grape-vine taken up and laid on a trellis, running up ten feet, and being proud because it covers the trellis with great broad leaves. You cannot see anything except the leaves; but the vine plumes itself on being so thrifty, and says, "Am I not laid in well? Don't you see what the gardener has done? He has taken the stems near the ground, and carried the one on the right up there, the one on the left up there, and the central one up here; they are all close pruned; and they cover the trellis perfectly. They have just as much wood as they ought to have, and no more. Now, really, am I not well laid in?" I say, "Yes, you are laid in beautifully."

About June I go and survey that vine again, and, vainly searching the air for the delicate fragrance, say, "Where are

your blossoms?" "Well, I don't know about blossoms. I have heard a great deal about blossoms; but I believe in tough, hardy leaves. See my leaves. See how well I am laid in. See how orderly and regular I am."

By and by I go again, and look, and say, "Where are your clusters?" "Clusters? I have heard about clusters; there are some fancy vines that think a great deal of clusters; but look at me. See how healthy and regular I am. See how well I am laid in." It is empty of blossoms and empty of fruit; but it is very proud to think that it is well laid in, and that it has such great healthy leaves. What is such a vine good for?

Now, men think in regard to morality just in the same way. They think, "I am a good husband; I am a kind father; I am an honest man; I pay my debts; I am a good neighbor; I am laid in all right." Yes, in your lower nature you are. I do not despise grape-stalks when I find fault with the vine because it has no clusters. I do not despise the leaves that are on the vine. It is what is not there that I find fault with the vine for. I say, You ought to be a good father and a good husband; you ought to be a good mother and a good wife; you ought to be a good brother or sister; you ought to be a good teacher: all these things are right; but they are nothing more than leaf-forms. You are regular; you are pruned in respect to excrescences and rampant growths; you are laid in well; you are admirable as far as you go; but where are your blossoms? Where is your fruit?

Men were born to be more than animals, more than social beings, more than civic creatures of this horizon-bound clime. The circuit of the sun is not the circuit of the soul. The paths which we are to tread are not such as the stars tread. We are of God. Ours is infinite duration. We belong to the commonwealth of the universe. We are allied to the noblest natures, to princes, and thrones, and dominions, and powers infinite and innumerable. They are ours; all things are ours; and we are Christ's.

When I look upon men I do not find fault with them because they are good in their neighborhoood—they ought to

be good there ; I do not find fault with men because they are upright in business—they ought to be ; but where is your manhood ? These other things are your earthhood ; where is that which distinctively is your spiritual manhood ? Those things which unite you to God are within you—higher and nobler dispositions ; virtues ; spiritual qualities ; those that rise above the ordinary and lower ranges of human life.

I criticise, by the enunciation of these principles, the method by which men attempt to come to Christian development—namely, painful watching ; specializing of daily duty ; in short, the whole dominion of conscience. It is true that every man needs all the faculties which he possesses ; but it is not true that every man works as well by one faculty as by another, when it is in the ascendancy. Every man, in order to be an eminent Christian, should have the various faculties of his mind more or less brought into play ; the reason, among other things, should have its part, and perform an important function ; and there should be pre-eminent in men an interpretation of conscience : but experience has shown that men who attempt to develop the kingdom of God in power, by the submission of their life to conscience, are unhappy just in proportion as their conscience is acute ; for this is a faculty which grows by what it feeds on. It is inexorable. The more sensitive it becomes the more it blames. The more nearly you come to perfection the more imperfect you feel. Conscience, when it is the ruling faculty, fills men with discontent, and so with a kind of perverted moral consciousness. There are many men who would scorn the imputation of living for themselves ; but they are all the time revolving about themselves, by reason of the influence of their consciences upon them. And it makes not only them, but those that are around about them, unhappy.

Some men's consciences are like some old-fashioned New England housewives. They are so intolerably industrious, they are so outrageously neat, that nothing has any peace in the house. They are searching and sweeping night and day. They run hither and thither in their zeal ; and nobody dares to sit down, or stand up, or come in, or go out. Everybody is disturbed and made uncomfortable by those

insatiable housewives who want everything clean and orderly. The house is so very orderly and clean that nobody can live in it. And there are persons whose consciences will not give them any rest, and who are all the time thinking about what they are thinking, and what they are not thinking; about what they are doing, and what they are not doing. Their consciences are like an intrusive light that goes about peering into every secret place; and they have no repose, no self-confidence, and no trust in God. Inquisition, inquisition, search, search, is the order of the day with them. A man's conscience is like some detectives that I meet. I know them. They may be without belt or star; but they are unmistakable to one who observes them. There is a looking and seeing everything, behind and before, and all around, without seeming to see anything. A man comes into the car, and takes a glance, and scans everybody there in a minute; and yet he does it in such a way as not to be noticed by ordinary persons. A man comes on to a steamboat, and moves gently about, and sees every group, and takes a general estimate of all the passengers; and yet keeps himself inconspicuous, and quiet, and unobserved. There are people whose consciences go about in the same way. They crouch down, and look, and see everything; and they do it in such a way as not to attract any notice; and yet they are all the time stirring men up, tormenting them, and taking away their peace. You cannot thrive under conscience. It is impossible.

Conscience is the traditional stepmother, that knows how to wash and dress the children, and how to whip them. She gives them lessons, and lessons, and lessons, but very little bosom. Love is like a mother indeed. Many a mother takes the wicked child into her lap and melts the depravity out of him. There is more in one love-crush to make a child feel guilty than in all the spans you could put upon him. The arm is stronger than the hand. And men who attempt to live by conscience-force; men who attempt to build the kingdom of God in themselves by the mere power of conscience might as well take the job of organizing summer in Westchester County, and seeing that all the sorrel, all the grass, everything that grows there, comes

up at the right time and in the right way. How absurd it would be for a man to attempt by special care of each to produce in their due season the various kinds of plants and flowers! Let him stay at home, and when, under the influence of the sun, the air is warm enough, they will come forth.

Now, in the higher Christian life this incessant attention to a man's self, and attempting to act under the dominion of conscience, is full of disquiet, and acridness, and distress. You never can reach peace along the way of conscience. There is but one way in which to reach it, and that is along the way of love.

What men want is something that has in it the divine nature—the breeding, the inspiring of reflection—and that quality which we derive from Him who came to give his life for the world that was destitute, in degradation, and at enmity with him—that element of the character of God by which the heart is stimulated and made to aspire—that form of love which brings life, and spiritualizes life, and beautifies life—that which gives continuity, and ease, and victory to a man's better self—that which the Bible is so full of, and so little of which is to be found in theology.

I have heard of men being put to death because they did not believe in the real Presence in bread and wine; but I never heard of a man being put to death because he did not love. I have heard of men being put to death because they did not believe in the true church; but never did I hear of anybody being put to death because he had not divine dispositions.

A man may be stingy, selfish, grasping, hard, bitter-tongued, and bitter-thoughted, and no man arraigns him; he is as happy in the church as a swallow in a barn, and nobody excludes him; but if a man says that he does not believe in the Trinity, then the cry is, "Out with him! out with him! out with him! He hasn't right ideas. He don't believe 'In Adam's fall, we sinned all.' He don't believe in the total depravity of mankind." A man may be rancorous, he may be cold-hearted, he may be unsympathizing, he may be uncharitable, he may be full of worldliness exteriorly wrapped

in admirable propriety ; he may be like a bundle of nauseousness done up with paper and a string that are all right and beautiful ; he may have all manner of things like these about him, and yet he is tolerated ; and men looking upon him say, “ Of course, we are all fallible. The church is meant for sinners, therefore the church is full of them ;” but once let a man vary in respect to the ordinance of baptism, once let him believe that the exhibition of water as a symbol is enough as compared with sprinkling or immersion, as the case may be, and it goes hard with him—it goes hard with him even here, and in this nineteenth century.

There are now four Episcopal Churches in England. The Church of England has four divisions at least, and I have no doubt that if I took a microscope I could see fourteen ; and these divisions do not turn, in any instance, on the kingdom of God in men. The question is not, in one single instance, a question about consecration, love-power, faith, inspiration, insight, or victory over the world. It is a question about altars and candlesticks in some cases ; it is a question about cassocks and all sorts of furniture in other cases ; it is a question about methods and subordinations in still other cases ; it is a question about facing to the east or to the west inside of a church in yet other cases. Sometimes the question turns on lineal descent—or whether we came down on right lines or not. I myself believe in the Apostolic succession ; I do not believe that any man is fit to be a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ who cannot show that he is lineally descended from the apostles—not, however, as to the flesh, but as to the spirit. Any man who can say, “ Though the more I love you the less I be loved, I am willing to spend and be spent for you : I count not my life dear unto me ;” any man who can say, “ I am willing to be an offscouring, and to die deaths daily ;” any man who can say, “ I have learned both how to abound and how to be abased ;” any man who reaches out after that manhood which is in Christ Jesus, and shows that he came down from the apostles in that line—in his inwardness, in his moral traits, in the beauty of holiness—any man who can do that, I think is fit to lead the church, and is ordained by the Holy Ghost. But if any man comes

right straight down from the apostles, and has not the kingdom of God in him, I do not think he is fit to be a preacher of the Gospel. Therefore, while I believe in apostolicity, while I believe in the line of descent from the apostles, it is inward and spiritual, and not outward and physical. It is a thing which is not imposed by any touch—yes, by the touch of the Holy Ghost it is. He is of Christ who is Christlike, and he is not of Christ who is unchristlike.

Church work, then, as a substitute for the life-work of men, is another point of criticism. Men suppose that they are doing the will of God when they keep Sunday ; when they read their Bible ; when they say their prayers ; when they go to church ; when in church they maintain decorous deportment ; when they comply with all church forms and requisitions. They have an idea that attending to these duties is religion.

Well, now, a boy of fifteen years of age wishes to develop in himself the kingdom of health. He sits down at the table in the morning. There is not a thing in any dish ; but there is a plate, there is a knife and fork, there is a cup and saucer, there is everything which is needful in the line of dishes ; and he commences, with a vain show, and makes as if he were eating off from his empty plate, and drinking out of his empty cup ; and when he has gone all through the motions of taking a meal, he gets up, and goes out, and says, “There now, I am ready for my day’s work.” Is not a boy who does that like thousands and tens of thousands of Christians on Sunday ? They rise up in the morning ; and they are so conscientious that they would not shave on the Lord’s day ; nor would they black their boots on that day. They are too conscientious to do any work on Sunday. They go to church, and the moment they are within the building they are very sober. They are shocked at anybody who looks as though he were happy. They sit down in the appointed seat, and put their feet in the regular position, and wait till the services commence. Then they go through the proper singing, and listen to the sermon ; and then they get up and go home. On their way home, they say, “ Our dominie was not quite so good as usual this morning. Well, you cannot expect a

man always to do his best. But the singing was admirable, very nice, this morning." When they get home, they walk into the house very sober, and eat their dinners very earnestly; and afterwards (it being a day of rest) they sleep. When they wake up, they wonder whether it would be wicked to read a newspaper. So they get the *New York Observer*, half of which is meant for week days and the other half for Sunday. But they never can find where the boundary runs; so they read on, and read on, with a sort of suppressed feeling that they have done wrong, though they do not know as they have. And when the sun goes down they have the feeling, "There! I have got through it. Haven't I held out well?" That is called growing in grace! Is it not like eating nothing out of empty dishes?

How many there are who never, in all their life, form a vivid conception of the distinction between the work of God in the soul, ripening powerful dispositions into noble forms and fruitfulness, and the mere instruments by which that is done! I revere the Sabbath. I think it is God's blessing to the world. I certainly revere the church, and love it; but I regard it as simply a slave—my slave. What are all these things but your implements and your tools? Where is your work? It is in yourself. What is it? The lessening of pride; the reduction of selfishness; the inspiration of faith; the larger development of joy into peace, and of peace into joy. You are to have such sympathy with God that God himself shall come to be enthroned in you by the power of love; by its prophecy; by its action; by its discriminations and disciplining relationships. By this you become men; and if the Sabbath ministers to this, blessed be the day. If it does not, it is empty. If the Bible helps you in this, it is good. If it does not, it is a dish bottom-side up. All these are helps; but the thing itself—the kingdom of God—is in you.

Men and brethren, do you think I preach too much on this subject? I believe and feel that we are coming to a new Dispensation—not to a new sect. I should abhor a sect. And anything in this world that I should abhor more than another would be a sect with my name on it. There is but

one name that should be borne by Christians, and that is the Name above every name. What I hope for and long for is to see in the Roman Catholic Church, and the Episcopal Church, and the Lutheran Church, and the Presbyterian Church, and the Baptist churches, and the Methodist Church, and the Congregational churches, and the Swedenborgian Church, and the Universalist Church, and the Unitarian Church, and all the other churches whose names I have forgotten—what I hope and long for is to see in them *all* the spirit of Christ so prominent that their characteristic quality shall be the one which is in the candle—not in the candlestick, which may be of gold, but which of itself is good for nothing. The characteristic of the candle is the light which it sheds out, and by which it lights everyone that comes into the house. The power which I wish to see in the churches is the scarcest, and yet the most competent to do things the most marvelous. I mean the power which there is in the regenerated soul in the realm of divine love.

Oh for the day when there shall be an enthusiasm of fighting by the power of love ! Oh for the day when the silver trumpet shall throw away the brass one, and when the war shall be such a war as summer wages against spring, or as spring wages against winter, warmth fighting against cold, and germinant growths against barrenness ! Oh for the day when men shall recognize the fact that it is not in the lower life physical, nor in the lower life social, nor in the lower life intellectual, nor in the lower life æsthetic or beautiful or imaginative, but in the life that is higher than all these, and that blossoms out from these as the flower blossoms from the stem, that manhood stands, and in which the purity of the church stands—namely, the power of Christ *in men*, the hope of glory ! There is the whole charter.

My own life passes fast. My years are few and mostly spent. I am not far from seeing, who have never yet seen ; from hearing, who have never yet heard ; from knowing as I am known, who never yet knew. And as the days go on, and the city comes nearer, this burden is rolled on me, which I cannot rid myself of—Christian manhood ; the kingdom of God in peace and joy and love ; the power of Christ in his

disciples. This seems to me the first, the middle, the last, the glory of time, the hope of the world ; and it is given to me to preach it, with growing ardor, with intenser faith, with more yearning and longing. And may God grant that, when some few years more are spent, and you and I shall rise to see each other in the heavenly land, it may be with nothing to take back, with more glory than now we dream of, as we clasp inseparable hands, and move together to the cadences of love around about the throne of Him who loved us, and gave himself to redeem us, that we might become kings and princes unto God.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WE have no need to come to thee, O our Father, to tell thee what we are, or what we need. Thou knowest what things we have need of before we ask thee; and from thine abundant store we are provided with thy gifts perpetually. We need not search; for thy paths drop fatness; and we walk therein and find thee there. If at times they be hard, and straight, and narrow, yet at other times they are flower-clad and full, on either side, of bounties and mercies. But our life is not in our sense, nor in our outward experience, but in our soul. Our best joys are those which are deepest, and our affections need more than these bodies. The life is more than meat.

We rejoice, then, that thou hast made thy gifts such as they are, and that thou hast held them in such wise that if they are to be enjoyed in their full we must needs come to thee. Their fragrance is of thy love and of thy kindheartedness in giving; and we draw near to thee with supplication, but yet more with thanksgiving; with petitions, but yet more with a recognition of mercies in over-measure.

We draw near to thee, knowing that thou hast first drawn near to us. It is not the bird that calls the sun, but the sun that wakens the bird to sing; and it is not our voice that calls thee near to us: it is thy coming near that draws us to thee, and fills our hearts with strange joy.

We thank thee for thyself, and for as much of the revelation of thyself as we can understand; but how much lies beyond! How can selfishness interpret boundless beneficence? How can they who ingurgitate everything, and would draw the very seas into a whirlpool of selfishness, understand Him who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many? We are withstood by our passions, which cannot represent thee, through which thou canst not pierce to show us the image of thyself; and how dead, how feeble in blossom, and how fruitless are those affections in us which represent the divine nature! Our condition brings us to thee, and we approach thee with multiplied petitions, that we may be delivered from our lower self, that we may be born out of the flesh into the spirit, and that by holy dispositions and sweet affections we may have in us those elements which can interpret thee.

We pray that thou wilt make thyself known to us by all those trials which are needful; by all that discipline which shall cleanse; by that pressure to escape from which we must needs fly up and find exaltation.

We pray that thou wilt so inform us by thy spirit inwardly that we may see that God who is invisible, and dwell as seeing him.

We pray that thou wilt grant to us, this morning, a sense of thy great goodness, and of the glory of that goodness, and a sense of the universality of thy kingdom. We come from our small ways and narrow affairs, pressed in, hedged about, beaten, buffeted, racketed hither and thither, in this noisy world where men are as stones.

Grant, O Lord, our God, that we may have some conception of the kingdom of God that shall deliver us from the poorness and the barrenness of this lower sphere. Thou that didst come to open the

prison doors and to set free the captive, deliver us from the confinement of the flesh, from the limitations of our narrow ways; and grant us some sense of that kingdom of God which is within us, and which is to go on enlarging and brightening, and becoming more and more summer-like in the production of all the fruits of righteousness. Grant that we may rise somewhat into that sphere where thou dwellest habitually. It is easy for thee to think infinite things; and grant, though we may not follow thee, nor run in the line of thy thought by our poor limping way, that we may still have such encouragement as that which comes from the fact that the Sun of Righteousness hath arisen with healing in his beams and be held up above the storm, where silence dwells that is full of untroubled peace. So may we have a sense of the largeness of our lives, and of the glory of the upper sphere. May we be able to enter into it, and find the realization of thy promises. Be to us as the door into which we may run in the day of battle. Be to us as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, full of grateful coolness. Be to us as a fountain in the desert where we may slake our thirst and yet live. Be to us as brooding wings underneath which we may trust. O Lord our God, fulfill all those images of peace and protection with which thou hast tempted our thoughts.

And we pray that in thee we may find rest, inspiration, hope, joy, life. Thou art all in all. Give to us, then, something of everything to-day; for all our nature waits for that which we ask, that we may have a cleansing sense of uplift, of patience and of sweet submission to thy will, as with a full knowledge of its goodness. Grant that we may have a sense of the beauty of things present by the light that is shining on them from things absent and far away. Grant that this life, with all its duties, may become precious to us by reason of the relation of those duties to our immortal blessedness. We pray, above all, that we may have that strong center of love which is refreshed and invigorated from thine heart. May our heart, in love, stand triumphant, sovereign over every other influence. And we pray that thou wilt sanctify to all thy dear servants thy dealings with them; and if any are bowed down as the rush before the wind, Lord, lift them up. Thou wilt not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking wick until thou bringest forth judgment unto victory.

Give the victory of sorrow to those who are in affliction. Give the victory of knowledge and trust to those who are in doubt and perplexity. Give to all who are weary that victory which comes from rest in God.

Grant, we pray thee, that all those who are perplexed with multiplied cares, and who are so harnessed to human things that they are perpetually drawn downward toward the earth, may renew their strength. Grant that as their day is so their strength may be also. Grant that they may be conscious that God pours upon them the balm and refreshment of his own everlasting strength.

We pray that those who are under responsibilities that gird them, that those who are in captivity, being under the dominion of their tormenting consciences, may be able to break away from their jailers and know that they are not prisoners any more, but Christ's free men in the commonwealth of love. May they be able to stand up, and

defy, and put underneath their feet, that conscience which torments them. Let them ever be under the dominion of love in the realm of grace. Oh, teach us what is the liberty of the soul. Give us to understand what is that gift which thou didst come to bring to this world. Pour out thy love on hearts which are as a wilderness, that they may spring up and bud and blossom as the rose.

Draw near, we beseech of thee, to all who are in perplexing relations, and enable them to maintain manliness in the Christian life. Help them. They need succor and daily support. Minister it unto them.

We pray for those who are beginning to live with new thought of life, with higher intelligence, and with better purposes. Grant that they may not be discouraged nor become weary. May they, in this life that is full of imperfections, every time they fall, be lifted up again; and may they go on from strength to strength, knowing that if they persevere they shall yet stand in Zion and before God.

We pray that thou wilt grant power to all those who are weak. Send light to all who are in darkness. Let the whispering of thy spirit come to those who seem solitary in desolate places.

Grant, we pray thee, to all who are seeking thy presence and comfort, the anointment of holy oil within. Visit those who are bereaved, not to stay their tears, but to sanctify them; not to take away their sorrow, but to make that sorrow a ministering angel to them. We pray that those that are may be as though they were not; that those that are in families may be as though they were desolate. May we hold all things as in a shadow. May we more and more perceive that the things which are seen are not; and more and more may we believe that the things which are invisible *are*. May we understand that our strength and life are beyond and above, in the great realm of the coming life; and may we prepare for it, and look at all things here as they stand related to that more glorious disclosure which shall be made to us when God shall come, and we shall be brought with him into his kingdom, and stand before the hosts of angels and rejoicing saints in heaven.

We thank thee that the thought of heaven grows clearer and clearer, and that in our imagination the realm above is growing more and more populous, and that there are so many there who know us, that there are so many going continually who shall know us, and that we are not to be strangers in a strange land, but that heaven is becoming more and more a home to us.

Thus may our conceptions, sanctified, lift us up, and bring us very near to the gate from whose joy, before we enter it, shall roll forth some song; and grant that, peradventure, some leaves of the tree of life may fall, and that we may catch them for the healing of our sorrow.

We pray that the word of truth, which gives us strength and light, may go forth to those who sit in darkness. May there be a Sabbath to those who seek no rest to-day. May there be a gospel to those who care not for truth. May they who are engaged in teaching those that are out of the way not be weary in well-doing. May they sow abundantly, and be strong in the faith that they shall reap an hundred-fold.

Bless thy ministers of every name. Clothe them to-day with the power of God, that they may make known the counsel of God for the welfare of men. We pray that thou wilt take away divisions between churches. Remove all separating walls. Unite thy people by the affinities of a Christlike love. May the power of the gospel go forth with godliness of life, with kindness of disposition, and with righteousness, throughout the length and breadth of this land. Grant that there may be justice and liberty everywhere. Therefore, grant intelligence, that ignorance may flee away, and superstition, and its weakness. May the power of man to oppress his fellow man be destroyed by the strength of human life in its sacredness. We pray that the kingdoms of this world may speedily become the kingdoms of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. May he take his power and reign a thousand years.

And to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit shall be praises everlasting. *Amen.*



PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

OUR Father, we pray that thou wilt illumine our darkness, and give us, though we may not know what it means, that guidance which shall bring us surely to thee. What does the poor needle know, that points steadily northward? And though we do not know, grant that there may be that in us which shall turn our affections steadfastly toward thee.

We thank thee for the revelation which thou hast made of Jesus Christ. We accept that conception of divine love and power and activity and suffering and helpfulness which he gave to the world. We rejoice in it. It is just what we need. We want, O blessed Saviour, something that shall have compassion on us. We have enough to condemn us, we condemn ourselves enough, we are enough discouraged and enough in the dark; we have struggles and battles enough with ourselves and with the world around about us; and since our father is gone and our mother is gone we need something that shall be more to us than they were. And thou, O blessed Saviour of love and sympathy and patience toward those who are out of the way, we come to thee for the forgiveness of our sins. We come to thee for encouragement. We come to thee that thou mayest be to us as a bridge on which we may pass over that great gulf which separates us from the realm above. We come to thee for the certitude of our faith. We come to thee that thou mayest be the Bread of life to our hunger, and the Water of life to our thirst. We come to thee that thou mayest be all in all to us.

So may we live with our life hidden with Christ in God until thou dost appear; and then may we appear with thee, and rejoice with a joy which no man can take away from us.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, and Son, and Spirit. *Amen.*

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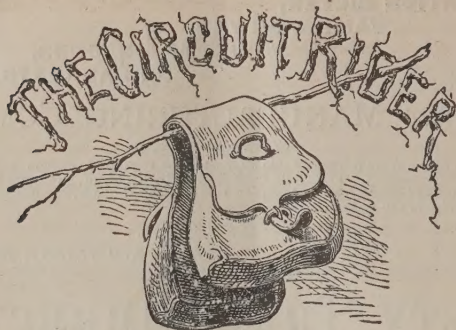
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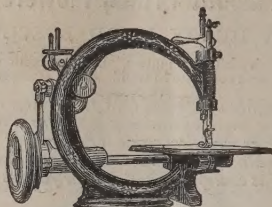
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